



United States Department of the Interior

North Cascades
National Park Service Complex
810 State Route 20
Sedro-Woolley, WA 98284

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Public Invited to Open Houses on Options for Grizzly Bear Restoration in North Cascades Ecosystem

Public comment period open through March 26, 2015

SEDRO WOOLLEY, Wash. – The public is invited to participate in a series of informational open houses regarding restoration of grizzly bears in the North Cascades ecosystem. The meetings are being held by the National Park Service (NPS) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) as part of the Grizzly Bear Restoration Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process for the North Cascades ecosystem. This is the first opportunity for public involvement in the EIS. The purpose of the EIS is to determine whether or not the agencies will take an active role in restoring the grizzly bear to the North Cascades Ecosystem.

The public open houses will be held at these locations and times:

Winthrop	March 3, 5-7:30 pm Red Barn Upper Meeting Room 51 N. Hwy 20 Winthrop, WA 98862
Okanogan	March 4, 5-7:30 pm Okanogan PUD Meeting Room 1331 2 nd Ave N Okanogan, WA 98840
Wenatchee	March 5, 6-8:30 pm Chelan County PUD Auditorium 327 N. Wenatchee Ave. Wenatchee, WA 98801

Cle Elum	March 9, 5-7:30 pm Putnam Centennial Center Meeting Room 719 East 3 rd Street Cle Elum, WA 98922
Seattle	March 10, 5-7:30 pm Seattle Pacific University Bertona Classroom 1 103 West Bertona Seattle, WA 98119
Bellingham	March 11, 5-7:30 pm Bellingham Central Library Lecture Room 210 Central Avenue Bellingham, WA 98227

In addition to these open houses, the public is invited to submit written comments at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/NCEG>. Comments may also be submitted through March 26, 2015, via regular mail or hand delivery at: Superintendent's Office, North Cascades National Park Service Complex, 810 State Route 20, Sedro Woolley, WA 98284.

"This is an important phase in the process of assessing environmental impacts," said NPS Pacific West Regional Director Chris Lehnertz. "Public comment at this stage is critical to ensure that all issues are considered."

The FWS listed the grizzly bear as a threatened species in the lower 48 United States in 1975. The species was listed as endangered by the state of Washington in 1980.

"The Grizzly Bear Recovery Plan calls on us to fully consider the restoration of the grizzly bear in the North Cascades, and this process will ensure we solicit the public for their input before putting any plan into action," said FWS Pacific Regional Director Robyn Thorson. "We will continue to work with our partners to make this an open and transparent process."

The North Cascades ecosystem encompasses 9,800 square miles in the United States and another 3,800 square miles in British Columbia, Canada. The United States portion of the ecosystem includes North Cascades National Park, Ross Lake National Recreation Area, Lake Chelan National Recreation Area, Okanogan-Wenatchee National Forest, and Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

A few grizzly bears have recently been sighted in the Canadian part of the ecosystem, but no grizzly bears have been sighted in the United States portion for several years.

The U.S. Forest Service and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife are cooperating agencies on the EIS. Funding for the EIS is provided by the NPS. The U.S. Forest Service, FWS and other cooperating agencies and partners will provide technical support throughout.

For more information on grizzly bear recovery, visit <http://bit.ly/NCEgrizzly> or nps.gov/grizzly.

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